Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for streaming a media file over a distributed information system to a client computer running a browser application, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request for a particular media file from a client computer,

providing a metafile, ~~whereby~~ wherein said metafile contains information about the identification, location and format of the media file,

returning said metafile back to said client computer,

characterized in that

the step of receiving a request for a particular media file from a client computer ~~further~~ comprises the steps of :

intercepting a download request for the actual media file and

reinterpreting said download request ~~in~~ into a request for receiving a corresponding metafile.

2. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of reinterpreting said download request includes the step of deriving information about said corresponding metafile from a portion of the URL.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2, wherein said portion of the URL is the file extension of the requested media file.

4. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing a metafile comprises one of the steps of:

dynamically generating a metafile, and

statically querying a metafile from a data store.

5. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of reinterpreting said download request includes the step of:

checking predefined filter criteria determining of whether or not a metafile is to be returned instead of the requested media file.

6. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing a metafile further includes the step of retrieving information about the configuration of at least one item chosen from the group comprising: version of the streaming product, type of the streaming product, location of the media file, load of the servers, load of the network, location of the client, quality of service.

7. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing a metafile further includes the step of reading information about the client's preferred streaming format and forming a metafile in accordance with the client's preference.

8. (original) A device for streaming a media file over a network, the device comprising:

a network interface for communicating to a web client,

an HTTP protocol handler for handling HTTP requests and

means for providing metadata for initiating the streaming of a media file,

wherein said metadata is returned to said web client in response to a request for said media file.

9. (original) The device according to claim 8, wherein the means for providing metadata is formed by a metadata generator.

10. (original) The device according to claim 8, wherein the means for providing metadata is formed by a metadata query component.

11. (currently amended) A computer-readable program stored on a computer-readable medium, said computer readable program being configured to perform the steps of:

receiving a request for a particular media file from a client computer,

providing a metafile, ~~whereby~~ wherein said metafile contains information about the identification, location and format of the media file,

returning said metafile back to said client computer,

characterized in that

the step of receiving a request for a particular media file from a client computer ~~further~~ comprises the steps of :

intercepting a download request for the actual media file and

reinterpreting said download request ~~in~~ into a request for receiving a corresponding metafile.

12. (original) The computer-readable program of claim 11, wherein the step of reinterpreting said download request includes the step of deriving information about said corresponding metafile from any portion of the URL.

13. (original) The computer-readable program of claim 12, wherein said portion of the URL is the file extension of the requested media file.

14. (currently amended) The computer-readable program of claim 11, wherein the step of providing a metafile comprises one of the steps of:

dynamically generating a metafile, and

statically querying a metafile from a data store.

15. (original) The computer-readable program of claim 11, wherein the step of reinterpreting said download request includes the step of:

checking predefined filter criteria determining of whether or not a metafile is to be returned instead of the requested media file.

16. (original) The computer readable program of claim 11, wherein the step of providing a metafile further includes the step of retrieving information about the configuration of at least one item chosen from the group comprising: version of the streaming product, type of the streaming product, location of the media file, load of the servers, load of the network, location of the client, quality of service.

17. (original) The computer readable program of claim 11, wherein the step of providing a metafile further includes the step of reading information about the client's preferred streaming format and forming a metafile in accordance with the client's preference.

18. (new) A method for streaming a media file over a distributed information system to a client computer running a browser application, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at a metadata server, a request for a particular media file from a client computer,

providing, at said metadata server, a metafile and a MIME-type, wherein said metafile contains information about the identification, location and format of the media file,

returning said metafile and said MIME-type back from said metadata server to said client computer,

starting a media player on said client computer based on said MIME-type, wherein said media player is started by a browser application running on said client computer,

forwarding said metafile from said browser application to said media player,

extracting information from said metafile, wherein the extracted information is extracted from said metafile by said media player and includes information identifying a streaming server to contact and a streaming protocol to use,

composing a streaming protocol request based on said extracted information,

forwarding said streaming protocol request from said client computer to said streaming server identified in said extracted information,

sending a streaming protocol reply and data packets from said streaming server to said client computer in response to receiving said streaming protocol request, characterized in that

the step of receiving a request for a particular media file from a client computer comprises the steps of :

intercepting a download request for the actual media file and

reinterpreting said download request as a request for receiving a corresponding metafile.